



EPHIANURA TRICOLOR. Gould.

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Tri-coloured Ephianura.

Ephianura tricolor, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 159.

WHILE traversing, soon after sunrise on the 11th of December 1839, the forest lands near Peel's River to the eastward of Liverpool Plains, a fine male specimen of this bird attracted my notice by the beauty of its colouring and the sprightliness and activity of its actions, while busily engaged in capturing the small insects that were hovering in the air near the ground. As may be supposed, the sight of a bird of such beauty, and which, moreover, was entirely new to me, excited so strong a desire to possess it that scarcely a moment elapsed before it was dead and in my hand; I regret to add, however, that neither my travelling companion Natty nor any other person could give me any account of it, since, like myself, they had never seen it before; nor could I during my residence in the colony either see another example or obtain any information on the subject. In a small collection procured for me in South Australia by an intelligent and enthusiastic collector, Mr. Strange, two other specimens occurred which I supposed to be male and female; unfortunately in this instance also they were unaccompanied by any notes of their habits or economy; which are yet to be ascertained, the species being doubtless migratory, and the specimens sent rare visitors from the interior to the part of the country where they were killed; any information respecting this *rara avis* would therefore be very acceptable.

The male has the crown of the head, upper tail-coverts, breast and abdomen bright scarlet; lores, line above and beneath the eye, ear-coverts, occiput and back dark brown; wings brown, each feather margined with brownish white; tail dark brown, each feather having a large spot of white on the inner web at the tip; chin, throat and under tail-coverts white; irides straw white; bill and feet blackish brown.

The female is similar in colour, but has only a slight wash of the scarlet colouring, except on the upper tail-coverts, where it is as brilliant as in the male.

The figures are of the natural size.